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TAGS: TGEN, TOCY, PLOS, UR, US

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF US-USSR WORLD OCEANS AGREEMENT
(06.00)

REF: MOSCOW 2673

1. DEPARTMENT COMMENDS EMBASSY FOR FRANK AND VERY USEFUL
REVIEW OF WORLD OCEANS AGREEMENT PROVIDED BY REFTEL. WE
ARE IN AGREEMENT WITH BASIC POINTS, ALTHOUGH ELABORATION
ON SOME ASPECTS POSED BELOW WILL BE WELCOME. TWO KEY
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DOCUMENTS--LAST-HALF 1977 REPORT TO NSC AND INITIAL DRAFT
OF NOAA'S OCEANS AGREEMENT EVALUATION (REGISTRY NO.
1909518) HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO EMBASSY AND WILL GIVE YOU
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

2. US SIDE OF JOINT COMMITTEE MET FEBRUARY 23 TO CONSIDER
NOAA'S FIRST DRAFT OF RENEWAL ISSUES. MAJORITY CONCLUSION

PARALLELED EMBASSY'S--THAT RENEWAL HAS POTENTIAL ADVANTAGE BUT MUST BE LINKED TO IMPROVEMENT. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THAT MEETING WILL BE PUT ON PAPER AND COORDINATED THROUGH EUR/IG; COPY WILL BE FORWARDED TO EMBASSY ON RECEIPT. THERE WILL BE SOME CHANGES FROM THE FIRST DRAFT (PARA 1 ABOVE) WHICH YOU SHOULD RECEIVE SHORTLY.

3. WITH RESPECT TO BALANCE OF BENEFITS, MOST AGREE THAT OUR TECHNOLOGY SUPERIORITY GIVES SOVIETS A GENERAL PLUS IN THE LEDGER, BUT USE OF SOVIET SHIPTIME, PROVISION OF DATA (DESPITE DELAYS AND POOR QUALITY) TO EXPAND DATABASES, AND MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEEP-SEA DRILLING HAVE TO BE COUNTED ON POSITIVE SIDE. EMBASSY'S ANALYSIS PARA 2 REFTEL SEEMS PREDICATED WHOLLY ON ACCESS ISSUE. IN PARTICULAR NSF ASSERTS THAT ITS PARTICIPATION IS WELL-BASED ON SCIENTIFIC CRITERIA COMPETITIVE WITH OTHER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES. POLYMODE PEOPLE THINK THEY HAVE FINALLY TURNED THE CORNER AND FORESEE BENEFIT IN NEXT STAGES.

4. AT FEB. 23 MEETING NAVY STATED STRONG CONCERNS THAT AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTED SOVIETS IN GAINS OF TECHNOLOGY AND OPERATIONALLY USEFUL DATA. NAVY ARGUMENT AT MEETING SEEMED WEAKER WHEN CHALLENGED ON SPECIFICS, BUT IT IS AN ISSUE MERITING CAREFUL CONSIDERATION IN LIGHT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY AND ABSENCE OF DECISIVE BALANCE OF BENEFITS. NAVY'S CONCLUSION IS THAT IT DOES NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUPPORT RENEWAL, BUT IF AGREEMENT IS CONTINUED ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE MUCH BETTER CONTROLLED.

5. RENEWAL QUESTION (AND SIMULTANEOUS REPORT FROM EMBASSY: GREENBERG LETTER OF JAN. 31) FOCUSSED ATTENTION ON LOS MARINE RESEARCH ISSUE. ALL AGREE THAT WE SHOULD USE AGREEMENT TO OUR ADVANTAGE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT WE HAVE MUCH DIRECT LEVERAGE. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IS TO ARRIVE AT DECISION ON RENEWAL AND ON WHAT WE MIGHT HOPE TO GET OUT OF AGREEMENT ITSELF. WE ARE, HOWEVER, NOW CONSIDERING SUCH OPTIONS AS DEFERRING DISCUSSION OF AGREEMENT RENEWAL WITH THE SOVIETS UNTIL AFTER NEXT LOS SESSION IN GENEVA FROM MARCH TO MID-MAY.

6. WITH RESPECT TO IMPROVING ADMINISTRATION, WE ARE EXPLORING FSO ASSIGNMENT POSSIBILITIES (FYI: HUD HAS ALSO INQUIRED ABOUT THIS ARRANGEMENT FOR HOUSING AGREEMENT). MORE GENERALLY, NOAA ADMINISTRATOR FRANK IS TOP-NOTCH, BUT HAS ONLY NOW BEEN ABLE TO TURN HIS ATTENTION TO SOVIET PROGRAMS. FUNDING SHORTFALLS AND GEOGRAPHIC DISPERSAL OF PARTICIPANTS ALSO APPEAR TO BE FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECTING

ADMINISTRATIVE SITUATION, WHICH NOAA HAS TRIED TO CORRECT.

7. ONE OTHER QUESTION RAISED FEB. 23, ON WHICH EMBASSY COMMENT WOULD BE WELCOME, IS EXTENT OF ADVERSE EFFECT ON SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD FUTURE COOPERATION ON PROJECTS OF INTEREST TO US IF AGREEMENT IS TERMINATED. ALTERNATIVES

FOR CARRYING FORWARD ACTIVITIES INCLUDE NOT ONLY OTHER US-USSR BILATERALS AS MENTIONED PARA 5 REFTEL, BUT ALSO AGENCY-TO-AGENCY AGREEMENTS AND MULTILATERAL FORA.

8. FOREGOING IS INTENDED PRIMARILY FOR EMBASSY'S INFORMATION AND PERSPECTIVE ON CURRENT STATUS OF RENEWAL QUESTION. WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR COMMENTS ON FORMAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EVALUATION PAPER AND NOAA RECOMMENDATIONS (PARAS 1 AND 2 ABOVE). VANCE

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